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U.S. Acts to Prevent Leak Of Atomic Sub Secrets

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A new Administration policy to prevent the disclosure of atomic submarine secrets to other countries through private United States firms was made known yesterday.

According to the new policy, the U.S. Government must approve and license any arrangements between U.S. firms and foreign governments or foreign firms in the area of maritime nuclear propulsion technology. Penalties under existing legislation for violating the new policy range from stiff fines to death.

This action was taken by the State Department after prodding by the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, which fears that even apparently innocent data about maritime nuclear propulsion might constitute a funnel for atomic secrets applicable to nuclear submarines.

What prompted the Committee's concern most recently was a would-be arrangement between the Westinghouse Electric Corp., a chief builder of America's nuclear submarine fleet, and Fiat of Italy.

Westinghouse, according to informed sources, was prepared to supply Fiat with nuclear technology and know-how for commercial maritime propulsion purposes. However, when Westinghouse told the Government about the proposed arrangement, the Government ordered the U.S. firm not to proceed.

Secret congressional hearings were held on the subject last month and as a result the State Department, after con-

sulting other agencies, developed a stringent policy on Government and private assistance in regard to foreign nuclear-propelled vessels.

Essentially, the new policy says that before information, parts or technology pertinent to U.S. naval nuclear propulsion can be divulged abroad, an export license must be obtained from the U.S. Government. No license can be issued unless the Atomic Energy Commission or the Defense Department approves.